

Your Job

Some workers imagine they own their jobs. They speak of their jobs as if they were married to them.

The worker has only got the loan of his job, and the loan terminates as soon as the boss (the real owner) decides that it is not profitable to keep the worker on it any more.

For the worker to speak about "my job" he would have to own the enterprise in which he works. As long as the real boss can sack him he certainly cannot speak of owning it.

Ever since the early communism was abolished mankind has been divided into two classes, the owners and the loaners.

The owners first owned their slaves, same as they possessed other animals. The owners did the supervising, the slaves had all the "jobs." When this system disappeared, a new one came into vogue, known as feudalism, under which the serfs had the loanership. The serfs had all the "jobs" going and the Barons enjoyed everything that the serfs produced.

To-day we have a system known as capitalism. Like the serf had the loan of the land, the wage worker has the loan of a job, on condition that he "makes good" which means that he produces a surplus over and above his own requirements, which goes to the owner. The job does no more belong to the worker than the land belonged to the serf, or the spoils under slavery belonged to the vanquished.

Property has played an enormous role in humanity's history. To possess it has always meant to enjoy; to suffer from want of it has meant a slave's existence. So that up through history those who had no property have been at the mercy of the owners, either as chattel slaves, or as serfs or as wage slaves.

But to-day we have reached the point of a new departure.

As of old, communism was broken up because it was no longer to the best interest of society to maintain the establishment institutions, so to-day communism is being forced on us again because we produce collectively, because we all have to co-operate to gain desired ends, and because no worker to-day can place his hands on a commodity and say: I made this entirely myself.

The wage worker is in the illogical position

at present of neither to be able to say: This is my job, or, this is my product.

Socialism, or a socialistic system under which we socially enjoy what we collectively produce, will furnish for the worker ownership of his job and the enjoyment of what he helps to produce.

—The Glasgow Worker.

Lightning Rods

The lightning rods of the labor movement are those new-style labor skates who pose as "radicals" and "socialists". Their function is to gain the confidence of the rank and file with glib phrases so that they can catch the discontent constantly arising and run it into the ground.

The comrade fakirs just now are making a specialty of the co-operative movement. They are going to show the workers how to do away with capitalism by going into business themselves. They talk of co-operative banks which are going to finance workers on strike, stores which will feed and clothe them, and so on and so on until the worker with radical sympathies, but no understanding of capitalist society, almost sees wage-slavery co-operated out of business.

Just stop and think for a minute. The railroads, steel mills, mines, lumber woods, great factories, packing houses—in fact all the natural resources of the country and the machinery of production—are in the hands of the capitalist class. As long as they control them they are going to control society. Before the workers can be free they have got to take these things away from the capitalists.

The co-operative movement is not to be disparaged. In so far as it is possible for it to be developed with the meagre resources of the workers, it provides an excellent training school in voluntary organization and management for those workers who take part. But whenever you hear anyone holding it up as the means whereby the workers are going to be emancipated, or even going to have their conditions materially improved under capitalism, you can be certain that he is a crook who knows better or an ignoramus who knows next to nothing.

There are no substitutes for revolutionary action.